



**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
255 Westminister Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

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Deborah A. Gist  
Commissioner

Dear Fellow Educators,

As I have said many times since I began my work as Commissioner, the single most important factor in the education of our students is the effectiveness of classroom teachers. You are the solution, not the problem, and we must do everything we can to support you. We must also do everything we can to hear your perspectives. One key mechanism for doing so is the *SurveyWorks!* Teacher Survey. Therefore, we are asking for teacher input on the design of the survey to ensure that it asks the right questions. We are also asking for you to respond to the survey, to help us reach our goal of 100% participation statewide.

As you may know, the new *SurveyWorks!* replaces the old SALT Survey. We now conduct the survey on-line, and the survey is shorter than the SALT Survey while retaining some core questions to allow for comparisons over time. This past spring, 94% of schools participated in the *SurveyWorks!* Student Survey. The information from this survey can help to identify barriers to student achievement and can provide opportunities to celebrate accomplishments. For example, 98% of students in elementary schools statewide indicated that they believe that their teachers like teaching.

This year, in addition to the Student Survey, we are adding the Teacher, Parent, and Administrator Surveys — to create a suite of surveys that will enable school teams, parents, and the community to get a 360-degree view of five critical areas for school success: student achievement, teaching, safe and supportive schools, families and communities, and funding and resources.

In the coming weeks, the *SurveyWorks!* Team will be working with various teacher groups to gather input and feedback. Please participate in this process if you are interested, and please spread the word to your colleagues.

We will administer the Teacher Survey next year, between January and March. The survey should take no more than 30 minutes to complete. We will collect the data anonymously, and we cannot tie the responses to individual teachers nor can we use the data for any personnel evaluations.

Please be on the lookout for the survey, and please work with your site coordinator to complete it. If you have any questions, feel free to contact *SurveyWorks!*, at [surveyworks@wested.org](mailto:surveyworks@wested.org) or toll-free at [877-787-5725](tel:877-787-5725).

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The *SurveyWorks!* Teacher Survey represents an important opportunity to voice your opinion about how we can continue to move our schools forward toward greatness and prepare all students for success in college, careers, and life. I am confident that, together, we will make the new survey a success. As always, I want to thank you for all the hard work you do every day on behalf of the students of Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah A. Gist', written over a horizontal line.

Deborah A. Gist  
Commissioner

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